Education Staff, Children & Families at Eva's Village Benefit from New Partnership with Passaic County Community College

New grant-funded partnership with local community college benefits education staff, children and families at Eva’s Village.

Paterson, NJ (PRWEB) February 28, 2017 -- Ten of the childcare and education staff at Eva's Village are getting together for a new weekend ritual - early each Saturday morning, they attend classes together at Paterson’s Passaic County Community College (PCCC) campus. They are working towards their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential through a new partnership between Eva’s Village and PCCC, funded by a grant from The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation. In addition to the nationally-recognized credential, the students will earn 11 credits over two semesters, which can be applied to early education degree programs.

The students are eager to learn new skills and to test new tools in the classroom, and they appreciate the opportunity for professional growth. PCCC ‘s Department of Early Childhood Education will teach them new lesson planning and curriculum development skills, safety and health awareness, social and emotional learning, and ways to strengthen family relationships.

“I know this training will help me be a better servant to the children at Eva’s, as well as with my future endeavors as an art therapist,” said Clarisa Mercado, Assistant to the Program Coordinator of Eva’s Childcare and Education Department. Like several of the other students, she is already working towards a college degree. Fellow student, Shahida Aktar, a Childcare and Education Aide at Eva’s, has been interested in early childhood education since high school. She found in the CDA course “an opportunity I could not pass up,” to help her achieve her goal to become a family therapist or psychologist.

After just two sessions, the students have already implemented new practices in the classroom, and they appreciate the benefits of training together. “I feel more connected to my co-workers than ever before as we strive towards this goal together,” observed Ms. Mercado. The partnership anticipates its positive impact will extend far beyond each student, not only to the children and families Eva’s serves, but to the wider community, as the training and support strengthens Eva’s Childcare and Education program.

Eva’s Childcare and Education Department offers care for the children of mothers who come to Eva’s Village seeking services and support for homelessness and/or addiction. The program provides a community service for these children, who may spend from 6 months to two years at Eva’s. The partnership’s objective is to deliver increased training and support to staff who serve children in a non-school related program.

The partnership’s three goals are: to build staff capacity through hands-on learning; to guide staff in family outreach activities that will foster home literacy learning; and to create an ongoing, professional learning community to identify and support childcare and education needs at Eva’s. “We hope to use our partnership as a model to assist similar community-based agencies serving our community’s most vulnerable children,” explained Linda Carter, Assistant Professor and CDA Program Coordinator at PCCC’s Department of Early Childhood and Teacher Education.

About Passaic County Community College

Since the 1970s, PCCC has maintained its commitment to offer students the opportunity for a quality education
at an affordable tuition. Today, PCCC operates four campus locations throughout Passaic County, each equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. PCCC offers over 60 degree and career programs, including Early Childhood Education degree and certificate programs, and an award-winning faculty, as well as continuing education and community-based programs.

About Eva's Village

For 35 years, Eva’s Village has been delivering hot meals and supportive services to help individuals find pathways to self-sufficiency. Founded by Msgr. Vincent E. Puma, Eva’s Village began as a soup kitchen in 1982, serving 30 meals a day to feed the hungry in Paterson. In response to the related issues of homelessness, poverty, addiction, health and mental illness, Eva’s Kitchen soon expanded its scope, adding programs and services to address these needs. Over the years, the programs grew into Eva’s Village, a non-profit, anti-poverty organization, which today is one of the most comprehensive social service agencies in New Jersey. Eva’s Village carries out its mission to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, treat the addicted, and provide medical and dental care to the poor with respect for the human dignity of each individual. Eva's 20 integrated programs help thousands of individuals rebuild their lives each year by addressing needs in the community for Food & Housing, Medical & Recovery Services, and Education & Training.
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